

Educator and Students' Equity and Agency During the Pandemic: An International Perspective

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 crisis, schools around the world at all levels had to respond to the situation most often without any preparation or time to reorganize their teaching. This chapter investigates how the Covid-19 pandemic amplified the need for equity and how teacher agency evolved through this time period. The study was qualitative and data were collected from 29 individuals from the same number of countries through narratives, and virtual interviews written responses to semi-structured questions. This chapter focuses on two main concepts: equity and agency. The authors met 18 times to work with the data, clarifying understanding of concepts, analyzing meanings, and writing up findings. Findings indicate that equity of access to online teaching and learning was a major challenge during the early stages of the pandemic lockdowns. However, many universities initiated some innovative strategies to minimize the inequities created by the migration to online learning platforms. Both educators' and students' agency evolved during the online and digital tuition provisions and made some agentic decisions that impacted their teaching and learning, respectively. During the Covid-19 pandemic, educators had much to say about their teaching online. Their experience and thinking can be leveraged in discussions about the best way forward after the pandemic experience. The mutual learning that we experienced collaborating internationally in this study points to the significance of using online facility to create and enhance solidarity among educators globally.

Keywords: Agency, Covid-19, Educators, Equity, Student teachers, Online learning